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SUBJECT: UN- FOLLOWING DPKO RESTRUCTURING BAN MOVES TO  
STRENGTHEN DPA - DESA NEXT

REF: STATE 146297

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY

¶1. This is an action request. Please see paragraph 13.

¶2. Summary: Following the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) earlier this year, Secretary-General Ban has now called for strengthening the

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Department of Political Affairs (DPA). Ban's proposal calls for an across-the-board increase in the size of DPA which would result in at least a 52 per cent increase in DPA's budget and an almost 50 per cent increase in staff. While we see some modest merit in enhancing DPA's ability to perform its vital functions, Mission believes we should carefully examine the proposals to avoid unnecessary duplication between DPA and other UN entities, including DPKO and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). Set out below are a brief review of the proposal (paragraphs 3 - 4), some considerations (paragraphs 5 - 10), options (paragraph 11), analysis (paragraph 12) and the Mission's recommended course of action (paragraph 13). End Summary.

BRIEF REVIEW

¶3. The major components of Ban's DPA strengthening proposal are as follows:

- Build the capacity of DPA regional divisions;
- Strengthen DPA's policy planning capacity and mediation support function through the formation of a Policy and Mediation Support Division;
- Strengthen its Electoral Assistance Division;
- Establish a number of posts to support the increased demands placed on the sanctions committees;
- Rationalize DPA's presence in the field through the establishment of a network of regional offices; and
- Tighten management, executive and oversight functions by refocusing the work of the Office of the U-SYG and reinforcing the capability of DPA's Executive Office.

¶4. Adoption of the proposal and establishment of 70 additional professional and 28 general service posts would require additional funding of 21 million dollars over the 65 million dollars already included in the regular proposed budget for 2008-2009 but reflects a 50 per cent vacancy rate during this start up period. At full incumbency, estimated additional requirements in the 2010-2011 and subsequent bienniums would be at least 34 million dollars - a 52 per cent increase over the current proposed budget of 65 million dollars.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

¶5. The proposal does not address the question of coordination/division of labor between DPA and DPKO/DFS as

called for by the ACABQ (as recently as in its report under the proposed program budget for 2008-2009 (A/62/7)) and as recommended by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). As OIOS pointed out in its recent audit of the management of Special Political Missions (SPMs) by DPA (A/61/357), "there is an inherent risk of duplication and overlap regarding the functions of the regional divisions of DPA and DPKO. Both Departments can be assigned the lead role for directing the substantive political operations in field missions. The final phase of the evaluation being conducted on the UN's political affairs program will not be completed until June 2008. In this final audit, OIOS will examine the 12 field SPMs led by DPA but supported by DPKO.

¶16. Therefore, there is a risk that resources of both DPA and DPKO could be dedicated to performing the same tasks and exceed those required for the current levels of performance. This is particularly relevant in light of the fact that the SYG is calling for establishment of 62 new positions in DPA's regional divisions. This would increase the number of posts in the regional divisions to 145 from 83 - a 75 per cent increase. Following the restructuring of DPKO, at full incumbency, DPKO's regional divisions will consist of over 110 posts. Thus, if Ban's DPA proposal is adopted in full, some 250 staff members will be working in DPA and DPKO's similarly structured regional divisions.

¶17. While requesting authorization to begin a process of establishing a number of regional offices, including in Singapore and Panama, Ban's proposal does not contain a meaningful analysis of his thinking in this regard other than that "the establishment of a small network of regional offices...will assist Member States and Regional Organizations with their preventive diplomacy efforts." The analysis does not address the financial implications of the proposal. Ban also does not address the role of other UN offices in the field and their relationship with DPA.

Mission understands that this network of regional offices would average 7 million dollars per biennium per office. Mission also understands that such considerations would be taken up during consideration of the proposed budgets of SPMs. Thus, a system of regional offices would be set up under the guise of a new SPM or several new SPMs. Mission is skeptical that junior UN officers stationed regionally around the world will have any greater role or capacity to prevent conflict than similar UN officers in New York, Geneva or elsewhere.

¶18. SYG Ban, in his statement in the Fifth Committee on October 25th, said that following DPA strengthening, he intends to "reform" the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

¶19. Mission projects that the UN regular biennial budget could soon pass the \$5 billion mark. Annual peacekeeping costs will soon top \$7 billion.

¶10. US early support for and acquiescence in strengthening U-SYG Lynn Pascoe's department without careful and deliberate scrutiny will open us up to criticism in this and future sessions that we are inclined to automatically support proposals when they involve our nationals rather than objectively examining all such proposals on the merits. This will undermine our credibility and influence during consideration of other aspects of the budget, including other "reform" proposals, such as proposals to reform the huge and inefficient bureaucracy that is DESA.

#### ¶11. OPTIONS

(1) Support Ban's proposals in full or in part, and call for additional resources to be provided in the regular budget. (Pascoe's position).

(2) Support Ban's proposals in full or in part, and call for the resources involved to be absorbed within the

resources already requested by the SYG in the proposed overall budget for 2008-2009. (Pascoe opposes)

(3) Express general support for DPA's important mandate but reserve judgment on the SYG's proposal pending consideration of further, more detailed and thorough analysis of the proposal in the resumed session in March. (Haven't discussed this with Pascoe)

#### 112. ANALYSIS

-- The UN regular biennial budget could soon pass the \$5 billion mark. Nonetheless, it is highly unlikely that delegations would support funding the costs involved "within existing resources" since this would likely involve cuts in other programs. There is a risk in calling for funding "within existing resources" since it may have the effect of generating support for the proposal, in principle, which will provide an opportunity for others to argue that increased funding is justified.

-- The SYG has not addressed a number of recommendations in recent ACABQ and OIOS reports, particularly the need to examine the division of labor between DPA and DPKO/DFS. Has Ban examined the impact on the functioning of DPA of the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office? These concerns are likely to be reiterated by the ACABQ which is expected to issue its report within the next week or so. In addition, the ACABQ is likely to raise other issues and request additional information before passing on the proposal. In this respect, a number of States from across the geographic spectrum are already suggesting that because of the size and complexity of the proposal and the questions it raises, the matter inevitably will need to be carried over to the March resumed session.

-- This GA, we are faced with a number of costly reforms in addition to DPA including, HR, procurement, and ICT. In addition, the G77 has indicated that it proposes to seek substantial increases in the area of development. Ban has also publicly committed to strengthen DESA's huge and inefficient bureaucracy following DPA strengthening. Our reaction to the DPA proposal will be followed closely by the G77, and our friends, in order to use our position to their benefit to adopt and pay for these many initiatives.

#### 113. RECOMMENDATION

Mission recommends the following approach in our upcoming Fifth Committee discussions: Mission should convey the message that while we strongly support DPA's important mandate and the right of the SYG and U-SYG to manage it as they see fit, all organizational and financial resource implications of this and any future management proposals must be fully examined prior to GA decision-making. Of particular

relevance is the need to ensure that any duplication in the activities of Secretariat departments and with other UN entities is kept to a minimum. Mission would work in the Fifth Committee to support a full and detailed analysis of the division of labor between DPA and DPKO/DFS, of DPA's relationship with other field offices, and of the impact of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office on the functioning of DPA. Armed with such analysis, the Department would determine whether to support additional resources for an appropriately revised proposal.

Khalilzad